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ABSTRACT

This booklet describes the Independent Educational Management Audit (IEMA), a systems approach to educational management that is intended to help school systems plan for the most effective use of available resources, in terms of specific educational outcomes. Through an emphasis on needs assessment, IEMA is designed to (1) help identify and remove barriers to educational effectiveness, (2) lead staff members into more creative and fulfilling roles, (3) improve educational management and organization, and (4) increase public credibility and support for education. Individual sections of the booklet focus in turn on assessing needs and setting objectives, planning to meet documented needs, budgeting, analyzing cost effectiveness, selecting and utilizing resources, revising and renewing the organization, developing public accountability, increasing instructional options, and assessing educational results. (JG)

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INDEPENDENT EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT AUDIT

A System Approach

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FOREWORD

To what extent are our schools *really* providing high-quality education?

This is a question being asked with ever-increasing frequency by parents, students, businessmen, labor leaders, school administrators, and government officials at all levels.

It is relatively simple to discover what resources are being put *into* the system (such as the number of teachers employed, what books and equipment have been bought, how much time learners and teachers have spent in the classroom, how many buildings have been constructed), but it is much more difficult to determine the *effectiveness* of these resources in producing the desired educational *output*—students well-prepared to play useful and creative roles in American society.

What troubles us is the realization that we have the most expensive educational enterprise in the world and yet we are not sure how well it is producing results for all the "partners in education."

Fortunately, there are ways available to get at a precise answer to the question: What is achieved educationally for the money spent? We have come to realize for example, that school systems, like business organizations, can be managed in accordance with pre-defined objectives.[1,2]* We know, furthermore, a fair amount about the process of establishing appropriate objectives.[3] And we have perceived the value of setting up measurable criteria against which to assess our progress in meeting these objectives. Moreover, it is well within our capability to fashion humane and responsive schools which facilitate constructive and productive change.[4,5]

In the process of applying the *Independent Educational Management Audit* we can make accountability work in education.

Through the effective use of programming, planning, and evaluation tools (and with the appropriate level of commitment) collectively we can realize predictable, high-quality educational outcomes without making ever-increasing demands on taxpayers or on the Treasury.

The *audit* process which is described in detail with suggested instrumentation is a fundamental tool recommended for local school systems and state education agencies throughout the country as a quick and easy means of assessing education needs.[6] The *audit* is a product of more than two years of meticulous system analysis.

The long-established fiscal audit in education offers a valuable precedent with its power to strengthen educational accounting systems. Now, the education *audit*

*References are listed in order of citation at end of Foreword.

sets the stage for an analogous effort on the output side. It is carefully designed to permit school systems on their own initiative to plan for the most *effective use* of available resources, in terms of *specific outcomes.* Its uniqueness lies in its focus on *needs assessment* as a vital preliminary to effective planning and problem solving. Although seen as *initiated* ideally by the superintendent and his staff, the audit is most effective if it is utilized as a tool by all the educational partners in concert—the community, the learners, and the educators.

Designed to strengthen the role of the professional staff in meeting the new demands of accountability:

the audit assists in identifying and removing some of the present barriers to educational effectiveness;

the audit leads to more creative and fulfilling roles for staff;

the audit yields basic improvements in management and structure; and most importantly,

the audit serves as a major vehicle for gaining both increased credibility and increased public support for education.

There are at least three approaches to the use of the audit:

- **Individuals and groups can participate with schools in joint planning to identify and solve pressing problems;**
- **The superintendent and his staff can initiate a management review to focus on strengths and weaknesses of the system's present performance; or**
- **The school board and the superintendent can apply the audit instrument in order to discern conditions which obstruct effective performance by the schools.**

The instruments contained in this book can be utilized successfully to achieve concrete results, regardless of the approach chosen.

The Chinese have a saying that a thousand-mile journey begins with a single step. In the context of present-day demands for greater accountability and a more effective delivery of educational services, the *Independent Educational Management Audit* can prove to be a significant first step.

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[1]George S. Odiorne. *Training by Objectives: An Economic Approach to Management Training* (New York: The MacMillan Co.) 1970.

[2]R. F. Mager. *Setting Instructional Objectives* (Palo Alto, Ca., Fearon Publishers, Inc.) 1961.

[3]W. J. Popham. *Selecting Appropriate Educational Objectives* (Los Angeles, Ca.: Vimcet Associates) 1967.

[4]Leon M. Lessinger. *Every Kid A Winner* (Chicago: Science Research Associates) 1971.

[5]Roger A. Kaufman. *Educational System Planning* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc.) 1972.

[6]Leon M. Lessinger, Dale Parnell, and Roger Kaufman. *Accountability Policies and Procedures* (New London, Conn.: Croft Educational Services) 1971 (in four volumes).

GENERAL CHECKSHEET

For School Systems and State Education Agencies Which Plan to Use the Independent Educational Management Audit

The eight-point introductory questionnaire below is based on key concepts developed in the larger audit document. It is designed to assist the district in preparing for a full-scale IEMA by:

- **Pointing out quickly those program areas which may require special review and modification.**
- **Focusing attention on the nature and dimensions of a serious needs assessment/planning process.**
- **Developing understanding and positive feelings toward the process among those who will actually be involved in its implementation.**

Not all districts or state agencies will be prepared to answer all eight questions "cold." Some will, of course, already have made partial assessments and introduced changes. However, *all* districts will benefit markedly from participation in both this preliminary exercise and the complete audit.

The eight preliminary questions are:

_____ 1 What steps have been taken to assess educational needs on a district-wide basis, i.e., to determine the *gaps between current program outcomes and desired or required program outcomes*?

_____ 2 What steps have been taken to establish a *formal plan* based on the needs assessment?

_____ 3 What steps have been taken in developing the school budget to provide for means of assuring program accountability?

_____ 4 Which of the "partners in education" were involved in the assessing of needs and development of the program budget?

_____ 5 What steps have been taken by the district to establish and maintain relationships with business and industry, and the community at large?

_____ 6 How are program decisions made so as to assure adoption of the most cost-effective solutions?

_____ 7 What steps have been taken to establish periodic reviews of previous institutional objectives to assure their relevancy in terms of *current* needs?

_____ 8 Which evaluation instruments are utilized to measure progress in meeting performance objectives based on documented needs?

1.0

WHICH OBJECTIVES? (Assessing Needs)

1.1 What steps have been taken to determine educational gaps between the results of the current program situation as it is (status) and the hoped-for situation?

1.2 Are needs identified as gaps (or discrepancies) between a current set of outcomes and a required set of outcomes?

1.3 Did the assessing of needs involve all the partners in education? Educators? Parents? Learners? Community?

1.4 Are needs stated in terms of learning outcomes rather than in terms of resources to achieve ends?

1.5 Does the school system state needs or program discrepancies in measurable terms?

1.6 Has the school system taken steps to obtain objective evidence to document each need (discrepancy)?

1.7 Have these gaps been shared with various partners in the educative process? Educators? Parents? Learners? Community?

1.8 Has the school system clearly ranked priorities as a result of identifying program result gaps? Have priorities been determined by all education partners?

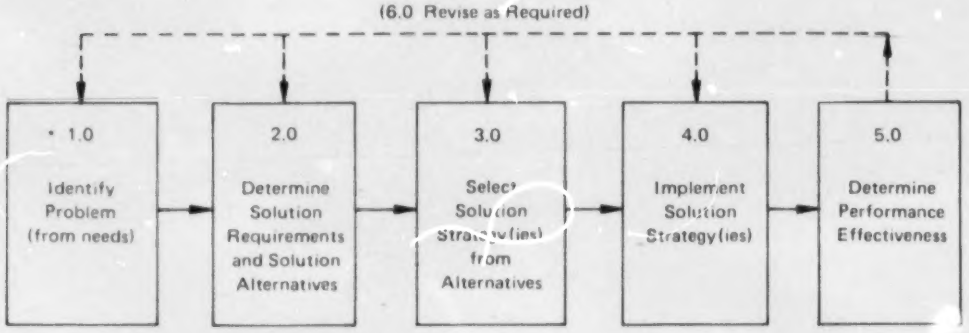
Checkpoints:

- List the barriers or roadblocks which stand in the way of undertaking a formal assessment of needs in your school system.
- List some of the roadblocks you might encounter when you identify needs as outcome gaps, not solutions.
- What recommendations must be made to the school board?
- Has a plan been formulated for involving other partners in education?
- What are the difficulties, if any, in involving the various partners?
- How do you see your findings being shared with other partners in education?

2.0

PLANNING TO MEET DOCUMENTED NEEDS

2.1 Does the school system use a closed-loop (self-correcting) management process? (See figure below.)*



2.2 What steps have been taken to establish a formal plan for education?

2.3 Is the formal plan based upon the formal *needs assessment*? Upon known educational gaps?

2.4 Did planning take place *before* the solutions were chosen?

2.5 Has the school system undertaken a study of major methods/means adopted in the past three years to determine how many were chosen after a formal assessment of needs?

2.6 Were any tools for formal planning used (such as system analysis)?

2.7 What steps were taken to involve the various partners in developing the educational plan (educators, the parents, community, and the learners)?

2.8 Is there a complete listing of WHAT is to be done to meet identified needs, and was this done separately and before HOW to meet the needs was determined?

2.9 How are cost-effectiveness ratios factored into decisions as to how goals will be met?

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*For more detail on a "closed-loop" process model for education, see *Educational System Planning* by Roger A. Kaufman, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972.

2.10 Are there measurable *performance* objectives for each division or subsystem of the school system, and is the public aware of these performance objectives?

What are the objectives for learners?
What are the objectives for parents and community?
What are the objectives for the school board?
What are the objectives for teachers?
What are the objectives for facilities?
What are the objectives for administrators?
What are the objectives for the interactions between these various divisions or subsystems of the school system?

2.11 What steps has the school system taken to inform all the partners about all the objectives?

2.12 Is the plan in such form that changes (reducing gaps) can and will take place as the plan is utilized?

2.13 Have alternative decisions and objectives been related to the needs assessment?

Checkpoints:

- List the barriers to planning by needs and their resulting objectives.
- What stands in the staff's way to adopting a closed-loop management system?
- What steps are required in order to implement a closed-loop (self-correcting) system?
- What assistance is required by the staff?
- List resources in the community or the school system which can be utilized to overcome barriers.

3.0

THE BUDGET AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR PROGRESS

3.1 Is the budget related to an assessment of needs and an education plan (or does it merely "price out" what has already been done)?

3.2 Are program objectives spelled out in measurable terms?

3.3 Are program items related to the needs assessment and the education plan?

3.4 Does the budget emphasize outputs and program objectives rather than inputs (class size, supplies, equipment, per-pupil expenditure, etc.)?

3.5 Does the budget show cost estimates of alternative program plans for a given objective?

3.6 Is there a program to replace labor-intensive practices with cost-reducing equipment and procedures?

3.7 What percentage of the operating budget was allocated for salaries and related benefits for all personnel over the last five years?

3.8 Has consideration been given by the board to setting a limit on the percentage of the operating budget which may be used for salaries and related benefits?

3.9 Has the school board adopted a policy allowing for a "set-aside" of at least one percent of the operating budget to be used as development capital for infusing innovation into the education system?

3.10 Has provision been made in the budget to allow for incentive benefits to teachers and administrators for exceptional performance?

3.11 Has provision been made to allow for contracting of instructional services with teachers within the system and with private enterprise?

3.12 Is the budget constructed so that a degree of fiscal independence may be exercised by individual instructional units?

3.13 Are program priorities clearly listed in the budget?

3.14 What steps have been taken to reflect in the budget the specifically stated program objectives? Performance objectives? Needs?

3.15 Is each section of the education budget preceded by a listing of specific, measurable instructional objectives? Were objectives derived from an assessment of needs?

3.16 What steps have been taken in the school budget to portray the true costs of instruction so as to provide for valid accountability of results?

3.17 Are you able to show that contracted services are measurably better than those provided by the school system? Or vice versa?

3.18 What steps have been taken to give individual schools responsibility for an operating budget and to involve community in the planning?

3.19 Are individual schools required to conduct a needs assessment and submit a list of instructional objectives upon which budgetary decisions can be made?

3.20 Are the school system's budget and fiscal staffs considered as full education partners?

Checkpoints:

- What are the barriers to installing program budgeting procedures?
- What specific recommendations are offered?
- What resources or talent are available within the school system or the business and professional community to assist the staff in implementing programmed budgeting procedures?

4.0

ANALYZING COST-EFFECTIVENESS

4.1 What steps have been taken to create "profit centers" in the school system; that is, encouraging individual instructional units to plan the most cost-effective programs possible and derive benefits from their initiative?

4.2 What steps have been made to identify learner-unit costs to assure that the most cost-effective programs are being used to meet the objectives of the school system?

4.3 Has the school system supplied the public with costs to overcome specific learning gaps?

4.4 Can the school system assure that it has investigated several alternatives and arrived at the most feasible cost-effective program?

4.5 Does the school system have a cost accountant or an education auditor who can assess effectiveness against costs?

4.6 Are cost-effective analyses by individual schools made available to the public?

4.7 Before seeking additional funds for capital expenditures, has the school system studied the extent of current space utilization and assured it now gets maximal utilization?

4.8 What would be the effect of year-round or after-hours school programs on the space requirements of the school system? Have the results of such a study been shared with the public?

4.9 What steps have been taken to study the cost-effectiveness of alternative ways of utilizing staff?

4.10 How are program decisions made? Are cost-effectiveness data accumulated and considered?

4.11 What steps have been taken to reduce labor intensity in the various school units?

4.12 What incentives are offered to the staff to become more efficient in providing educational services?

4.13 When smaller classes are requested, can proof be presented that smaller classes increase learning?

Checkpoints:

- What specific recommendations do you have for establishing a program to assure systematic, formal cost-effectiveness analyses?
- Identify the barriers to achieving cost-effectiveness within your school system.
- What are the barriers to achieving more decentralized authority within your school system?
- Will your school board enter into the accountability procedure as a partner in education?

5.0

SELECTING AND UTILIZING RESOURCES

5.1 Is resource selection based upon a formal procedure for considering alternative resources? What are the criteria for selection of resources?

5.2 What steps have been taken to assure that resource selection is tied directly to the catalog of needs and the education plan?

5.3 What steps have been taken to select resources on the basis of measurable behavioral objectives?

5.4 What steps have been taken to do cost-effectiveness studies of different resources?

5.5 Is resource selection based upon not only *what are the costs* but *what are the expected results*?

5.6 Are there pilot studies of alternative resource possibilities when the costs and/or consequences of making a poor selection are critical?

5.7 Is modeling and/or simulation ever used to assist in high-risk resource selection?

5.8 In resource selection, are the various partners involved?

5.9 In resource identification and selection, how many resources were selected in the past year which have not been used previously in the school system or individual schools? Can measurable proof be provided which shows that new resources are better than "old" ones?

5.10 Has the school system priced the cost of using instructional equipment and techniques over a period of years to reduce personnel costs?

5.11 Have these comparative costs been shared with the public?

5.12 Is the result of resource selection formally documented so that the process and criteria may be reviewed at a later time?

Progress in developing files listing the business community and other community sources

5.13 What steps have been taken to develop concrete programs utilizing the business community in non-instructional, managerial functions of the school system?

5.14 What steps have been taken to establish and maintain liaison relationships with business and industry, and other community groups?

5.15 What steps have been taken for students to visit and learn in local business and industry?

5.16 What steps have been taken to expose students to various career areas over time?

5.17 What steps have been taken to use successful educational procedures and tools in business and industry?

Progress toward establishing lay-advisory boards

5.18 What steps have been taken to specify responsibilities of lay advisory groups?

5.19 What steps have been taken to involve lay-advisory groups in needs assessment and in developing an education plan?

5.20 What steps have been taken for the continuance of on-going advisory groups?

5.21 Are the tasks of advisory groups related to the needs assessment and education plan?

Progress toward utilizing pupils in instruction and for program evaluation

5.22 What steps have been taken to utilize students as teaching resources?

5.23 What steps have been taken to provide instructional training for students?

5.24 What steps are being taken to evaluate the effect of student instruction?

5.25 What steps have been taken to measure the learning of the student instructors?

5.26 What steps have been taken to establish pupil tutorial programs to help overcome known educational gaps?

5.27 What steps have been taken to permit alteration of the school schedules enabling pupils to participate in instructional and tutorial programs?

5.28 What steps have been taken to incorporate program evaluation by pupils? How are evaluations of programs used? Do results from pupils become part of the needs assessment?

5.29 What steps have been taken to incorporate pupils' ideas in experimental programs? In regular programs?

Progress toward training professional staff to utilize available resources fully

5.30 Is training in resources utilization related to needs assessment and educational system plans?

5.31 What resources does the staff use now that it did not use last year? Are the learners performing measurably better?

5.32 Have inservice training programs evolved only after program gaps (based on needs assessment) have been identified?

5.33 Are staff development programs based on solution strategies which were decided upon before or after a thorough needs analysis was completed?

Progress toward coordinated planning for wide use of school facilities

5.34 What steps have been taken to develop increasingly flexible facilities to serve the changing education program?

5.35 Is the facilities plan related to a formal needs assessment involving the various partners in the educative enterprise? In designing facilities, is system planning used?

5.36 Has the school system explored partnership programs with business and industry and the possibility for utilizing business and other community facilities?

5.37 Has the school board assessed the number of vacant properties in the community with a view to utilizing spaces for instructional purposes?

5.38 Has an assessment been made of total community needs with a prospect of using buildings in the evening and weekends for broad community purposes?

5.39 Does the school board plan joint facilities with other community agencies?

5.40 Has the school system considered modular, manufactured school construction?

5.41 What steps have been taken to organize for year-round utilization of school buildings?

5.42 What steps have been taken to plan cooperatively for use of other community facilities in expanding education opportunities for the schools?

5.43 Were needs and objectives formally stated before existing or proposed physical facilities were decided upon? Or were educational specifications based upon previously determined solution strategies (such as team teaching, open classrooms,* etc.)?

5.44 Are educational specifications decided upon primarily by the architect, or does the architect base design on learning requirements?

*These are not necessarily "good" or "poor" solution strategies. However, school systems must first determine needs and problems before deciding upon the most feasible solution strategies.

Checkpoints:

- On the basis of your analysis what do you see as some of the problems which must be overcome? (*Problem is defined as the action required to close identified gaps.*)
- What are the barriers to overcoming identified problems?
- What talent can be utilized within the school system or community to assist the staff in removing barriers to effective resource utilization?
- Does your local or state chamber of commerce have an education committee? If so, is the school superintendent a member?
- If your local chamber of commerce has an education committee, are you acquainted with its program of work?
- Have ways been explored to involve the major employer(s) in the education planning of the school district or state education agency?
- Do the major corporations in your community have a "community affairs" officer? If so, have you discussed your problems and concerns with him?
- Can assistance be obtained from the state education agency?
- What kinds of training programs for staff are required at all levels?
- How do you see the results of your study on *Selecting and Utilizing Resources* being tied into the activities of the Task Force?

6.0

REVISING AND RENEWING THE ORGANIZATION AS REQUIRED

6.1 What steps have been taken to establish periodic review of stated institutional objectives? Have objectives been related to needs assessment and available resources? Have all partners been involved in the review?

6.2 What steps have been taken to establish a research and development group concerned with examining and formulating new organizations and programs?

6.3 Has the school system set aside a percentage of the operating budget for developmental capital?

6.4 What steps have been taken to incorporate a monitoring sub-system to check performance against objectives?

6.5 What steps have been taken to bring about changes in the administrative structure as a result of the identification of new goals and functions?

6.6 What steps have been taken to provide for greater involvement of partners in the educative process in the areas of planning and decision making?

6.7 What steps have been taken by the school system to utilize proven methods and tools (although the proven methods and tools might have been developed elsewhere)?

6.8 What steps have been developed for utilizing knowledge about newer and more efficient and economic administrative procedures?

6.9 What innovations now in use are measurably better than those practices formerly used?

6.10 What provision is made to disseminate information about promising innovations to staff?

6.11 What steps have been taken to establish the practice of direct funding to individual schools or classroom teachers?

6.12 What steps have been taken to encourage divergent views? By funding? By policy making?

6.13 What steps have been taken to fund instructional units on the basis of performance goals (and documented needs)?

6.14 What steps have been taken to provide individual schools with control over some operating funds?

6.15 What steps have there been to relate *control* with *responsibility*?

6.16 Have changes been measurably more effective and efficient?

Progress toward staff renewal

6.17 What steps have been taken to spell out staff development objectives?

6.18 Are staff objectives related to a needs assessment?

6.19 Has the school system considered staff needs in terms of gaps between the present competencies (and related practices), and those required to close the performance gaps of students?

6.20 What steps have been taken for specific evaluations of staff competencies in relation to program objectives?

6.21 What steps have been taken to institute a system-wide, on-going program of inservice training (based on a needs assessment)?

6.22 Is staff development based on an educational system model?

6.23 What steps have been taken to train administrative staff in techniques of management by objectives?

6.24 What steps has the school system taken to institute a program of performance reviews for teachers and administrators? Are reviews based upon outcomes achieved rather than procedures used?

6.25 What steps have been taken to plan ways and means for incorporating new practices?

6.26 What steps have been taken to institute reward procedures to recognize improved performance in teaching?

6.27 What steps have been taken to institute reward procedures to recognize improved performance by learners?

6.28 What steps have been taken to establish cooperative, on-site programs in staff development with colleges and universities, based on the documented needs of the school system, learners, and the community?

6.29 Has the school system worked with higher education institutions to establish training programs related to identified needs and objectives?

6.30 What steps have been taken to make risk capital available directly to classroom teachers? Has this been done? To what end?

Progress toward staffing based upon differentiated competencies

6.31 What steps have been taken to develop a breakdown of staff functions within schools?

6.32 Has staff planning been related to a concept of educational system?

6.33 On the basis of a needs assessment, can you identify staff requirements by differentiated competency levels?

6.34 What steps have been taken to organize the instructional program to accommodate differentiated staffing based on the requirements of an educational system?

6.35 What steps have been taken to develop salary schedules which reflect different levels of staff competencies, not just length of service?

6.36 What steps have been taken to relate salary increases to performance—based on periodic performance reviews?

6.37 What steps have been taken to determine amount of time spent by teachers in non-teaching tasks? In sub-professional tasks?

6.38 Has the school system studied instructional costs on the basis of a comparison between "consumable" and "capital intensive" costs? Projected over 3 years? 5 years? 10 years?

6.39 If used, do differentiated staffing and differentiated learning measurably improve learner skills, knowledge and attitudes?

6.40 Have results been shared with the public?

Progress toward increased staff collaboration

6.41 What steps have been taken to facilitate fuller collaboration among teaching and among non-teaching professional staff?

6.42 What steps have been taken to provide opportunities for professional collaboration during the working day? In terms of schedule? Space?

Progress toward performance-based specifications in job descriptions and contracts

6.43 If your school system negotiates contracts with teachers, what steps have been taken to include performance, accountability and cost-effectiveness provisions in the contract?

Checkpoints:

- What specific recommendations do you have for reorganization of the school system?
- Are recommendations based on a formal needs assessment?
- Identify the barriers to revising the school organization.
- Identify talent or resources within the school system or community which can be utilized in studying and improving the organizational structure to comply with identified needs.

7.0

ACCOUNTABILITY TO PUBLICS

Progress toward curriculum planning by performance objectives

7.1 What steps have been taken to establish program accountability by schools? By individual classrooms or groupings?

7.2 What steps have been taken to assess performance on the basis of precisely stated criteria? Are these criteria based upon documented needs (gaps)?

7.3 Are performance reviews done on the basis of objectives aimed at overcoming specific educational gaps?

Progress toward increased professional self-governance and accountability

7.4 What steps have been taken to assist staff in evolving standards and procedures for greater self-governance?

7.5 What steps have been taken to give individual schools a greater role in determining *how* needs will be achieved?

7.6 What steps have been taken to establish accountability policies and procedures? Have teachers and administrators been included in the deliberations?

7.7 As a result of the establishment of accountability policies, have different staff roles been identified?

7.8 Has accountability been tied to self-governance and performance reviews?

7.9 What steps have been taken to base evaluation of teachers and administrators upon performance-based data?

Progress toward self-study of school programs

7.10 What steps have been taken to provide for systematic self-study by individual staff and school units?

7.11 Is self-study based upon individual performance reviews related to previously specified objectives?

7.12 What steps have been taken (either with or without state mandate) to develop a system of accreditation for schools?

7.13 Is accreditation based on instructional performance rather than traditional input factors (such as degrees of teacher, classroom size, teacher-pupil ratio, per pupil cost, etc.)?

7.14 What steps have been taken to arrange for a regular periodic independent education audit?

7.15 Has the school board passed an independent education audit policy?

7.16 Is the audit based on documented needs (gaps) and an educational plan?

7.17 What steps have been taken to study cost-effectiveness in relation to specified program objectives?

7.18 What changes have been made as a result of the audit?

Progress toward formulating an accountability reporting system

7.19 What steps have been taken to involve pupils, parents and the community in the creation of an accountability reporting system, based on overcoming known educational gaps?

7.20 Are reports to parents and children formulated so that they can be aware of how well educational gaps are being overcome?

Progress toward evolving a comprehensive two-way communications system

7.21 What steps have been taken to report to the public the needs (performance gaps) of the school system?

7.22 What steps have been taken to develop open lines of communication among the staff within the school system on program requirements and alternatives?

7.23 What steps have been taken to institute a reporting system, presenting precise performance criteria and specific information on student performance?

7.24 What steps have been taken to acquaint the public with cost-effectiveness programs within the school system?

7.25 What steps have been taken to "educate" the public to ask the "right" questions of itself? Of its schools?

7.26 How many parents and citizens understand the reports of the school system? Has the school system determined what kinds of reports are required in order to increase public understanding?

Checkpoints:

- Identify barriers to the adoption of accountability programs.
- List recommended steps for overcoming barriers.

- What talent is available within the school system and community to assist the staff to develop accountability policies and procedures?
- Identify the priority curriculum areas that require greatest attention.
- What barriers must be overcome before the school system can utilize an independent education audit?
- What talent or resources exist in the school system and community to assist the staff in developing more flexible, cost-effective programs?
- What kinds of incentives are provided staff or individual school units to encourage development of additional cost-effectiveness options?
- What plans are there for rewarding teachers, administrators and school units for becoming more cost-effective in their operations?
- What steps have been taken to base performance of school board members upon performance-based data?
- Have steps been taken to base the performance of the school superintendent upon performance-based data?

8.0

INCREASING USEFUL INSTRUCTIONAL OPTIONS

Progress toward independent learning experiences for children

8.1 Based on an assessment of learning gaps, have individual schools explored several instructional alternatives? Is cost-effectiveness a consideration? Are cost comparisons between various options presented?

8.2 What steps have been taken to provide a flexible program for more program options to learners?

8.3 What steps have been taken to utilize new and proven hardware and software for self-instruction?

8.4 What provision is made for the learner to keep his own record of progress?

8.5 What steps have been taken—at the outset of the learning experience—to establish the learner's entry level by pre-testing?

8.6 What steps have been taken to acquaint the learner with his learning gaps and to design a course of action *with* him?

8.7 Does the school system have a program of individually prescribed instruction designed to acquaint the learner with and help him overcome his learning gaps? Is it made *individually responsive* instruction by involving the learner in setting goals and deciding among alternative learning methods and materials?

Progress toward varied instructional grouping

8.8 What steps have been taken to develop and organize facilities for different sized groups?

8.9 Has instructional grouping been based on needs assessment?

8.10 If the school system continues to group children in self-contained classrooms (1 teacher to a given number of students) can it support this practice with research?

Checkpoints:

- What are the roadblocks that stand in the way of greater learning options?
- List specific recommendations for expanding options for learners.

- Was the study of instructional options based on an analysis of needs? (Remember, a need is the difference between a desired result and actual results.)
- Were ways to increase options in priority areas explored first?
- List recommendations for ways to increase instructional options. Are the options selected the most desirable from a cost-effectiveness standpoint?

9.0

ARE WE DOING THE JOB? (ASSESSING RESULTS)

9.1 Are evaluation instruments utilized which measure performance objectives, based on documented needs?

9.2 What steps have been taken to provide for independent self-testing by the learner?

9.3 Are tests used in the school system geared specifically to measure the discrepancy (or lack of discrepancy) between what the situation was and what we hoped it would be, as outlined in the educational plan?

9.4 What steps has the school system taken to replace norm-referenced tests with criterion-referenced tests?*

9.5 Are teacher-constructed tests ever validated? Are they related to the needs and resulting, measurable behavioral objectives?

9.6 When was the last time tests in your school system were revised, changed, or modified on the basis of formal data?

9.7 Is there an independent educational audit based on identified needs (gaps)? Does the audit include an evaluation of management processes and organization functioning as well as an assessment of learning?

9.8 Do test results also include data on cost-effectiveness factors?

9.9 Do teachers and learners in your school system ever change their learning procedures/content on the basis of evaluations which are conducted continually during the educational process? If yes, when was the last time? Can a specific example be given?

9.10 Is evaluation a continual, ongoing (formative) process?

9.11 Are revisions to the learning methods and procedures a continual, ongoing process? Give example of program revisions undertaken as a result of evaluation process. Give example of more cost-effective programs which have resulted from the school system's ongoing evaluations.

9.12 What specific learning changes have taken place in individual schools and the school system in the last month? Six months? Year?

9.13 Were the changes in the plan based upon learner performance? (Or were they based upon administrative/teacher convenience?)

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*See Robert Glaser, "Psychological Bases for Instructional Design," *A. V. Communication Review*, Winter, 1966.

9.14 Are considerations for program revisions conducted periodically and formally?

9.15 Is there evidence that valid changes have been made as a result of formal evaluation of actual, measurable performance? In other words, have there been significant reductions in the educational gaps which were documented by the needs assessment?

Checkpoints:

- What recommendations do you have for utilizing criterion-referenced tests?
- Are the tests to be used based on specific behavioral objectives?
- Has a plan for reporting educational gaps and gains to the public been formulated? Does the plan include strategies for overcoming documented educational deficiencies?

FINAL CHECKPOINTS:

Now that the staff has completed the audit, perhaps you have some general observations and recommendations to make.

- Are there other areas which should have been covered in the audit? If so, what are they?
- Are there other barriers not previously listed which decrease the effectiveness of the staff? Please list these barriers.
- What general recommendations do you have for bringing about necessary changes in the school system?
- What kinds of specific help would you like so that you can begin to plan education programs that are addressed to documented needs?

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